

Brookline Single Stream Recycling [Single Stream Flyer](#) (PDF)

[2010 Recycling Guide](#) (PDF)

A message from the Brookline Solid Waste Advisory Committee and Frequently Asked Questions on the New Single Stream Program

Dear Neighbor,

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) is a group of citizen volunteers appointed by the Selectmen. Its mission is simply stated: advise the Selectmen on the best ways to reduce municipal solid waste. We are committed to moving Brookline toward a goal of being a “zero waste” community.

That you are reading this message suggests that you share that interest. Thank you. Your efforts make fiscal and environmental sense.

Single stream recycling is the next step in the quest.

Single stream takes the guesswork out of recycling. It makes recycling more convenient. It allows for automatic or semi-automatic collection. It responds to increasingly sophisticated sorting machinery. It even tidies up our streets.

As collection and disposal expenses continue to rise and as we become more aware of our environmental responsibilities, the challenges of municipal solid waste policy are increasing. SWAC will continue to advocate for changes that will be fiscally responsible, equitable, and better for the environment.

Please continue to acquaint yourself with Brookline's efforts and expectations by closely reading Brookline Works, by checking the website, by regularly reading the "Recycling Corner" in the TAB, by calling the Department of Public Works, and by informing yourself about best practices in surrounding towns and cities, across the United States and internationally.

Thank you.

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Adam Mitchell, Chair

Danielle Chaplick

John Dempsey

Barbara Field

Cynthia Snow

Frequently Asked Questions on the New Single Stream Program

What is single-stream recycling?

Single-stream isn't anything fancy. It simply refers to a new system that takes the two recycling "streams" collected through the Brookline curbside program — mixed paper and commingled containers — and puts them together in one toter. Voila. Single-stream. Two bins, now one. It is still important to follow the same guidelines applied to the two-bin program, except you put the two streams together.

I am elderly or disabled and can not transport a large cart. Can I get a smaller one?

- The smallest size toter delivered in September will be a 64 gallon toter. If after a two week trial period this significantly impedes your ability to recycle please call (617)879-4908 to discuss alternative recycling options.

- What are the advantages to single stream?

- By eliminating sorting, recycling becomes easier and increases participation and recovery rates. In many communities, recycling has increased 30% or more by switching to Single Stream Recycling. Single Stream also reduces collection costs because haulers can use single compartment trucks that can be compacted as opposed to specialized multi compartment vehicles that are more costly to operate. Over time this greatly reduces the energy required to collect the material.

How do I know what plastic is recyclable?

Think Bottles and Containers!

- All plastic food and beverage bottles

- Most plastic food containers
- Most other plastic bottles under 2.5 gallons in size

Just a few exceptions:

- Styrofoam cups and trays and microwave trays are not recyclable.
- If the bottle contained motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides, herbicides, adhesives, paints, or solvents, it

Are plastic bags recyclable at the MRF?

No! Plastic bags, plastic wrap, and other plastic “film” are not recyclable. Do not put your paper or cardboard

Should I wash my recycling before placing it in the bin?

Just one rinse for recycling should be sufficient, even for vegetable oil bottles. Cans, jars and bottles that

Can I recycle Styrofoam?

Styrofoam is a brand name for the material made from a type of plastic called polystyrene. Polystyrene is

Why can't prescription or vitamin bottles be recycled?

Prescription and vitamin bottles go through a different manufacturing process and, as a result, do not have

Can I recycle a motor oil bottle with a #2 on the bottom?

No. Motor oil residue has become one of the biggest contaminants for our plastics markets. The residue

Do I need to step on my plastic containers before recycling?

No, you don't have to step on plastic before recycling it. Some plastic, like milk jugs, is easy to step on a

Are black, #1 microwaveable containers recyclable?

No. Black plastic is not recyclable because of the dye. This includes microwaveable trays as well as oth

Why can't I recycle plant pots? ☐ ☐ ☐

Plant pots can't be recycled because the plastic is too dark to be used in new products. Also, there can't

Questions Call (617) 879-4908



Waste and Recycling Services Division, Baltimore, MD. Information provided by the Department of Public